DISARMAMENT

Newsletter

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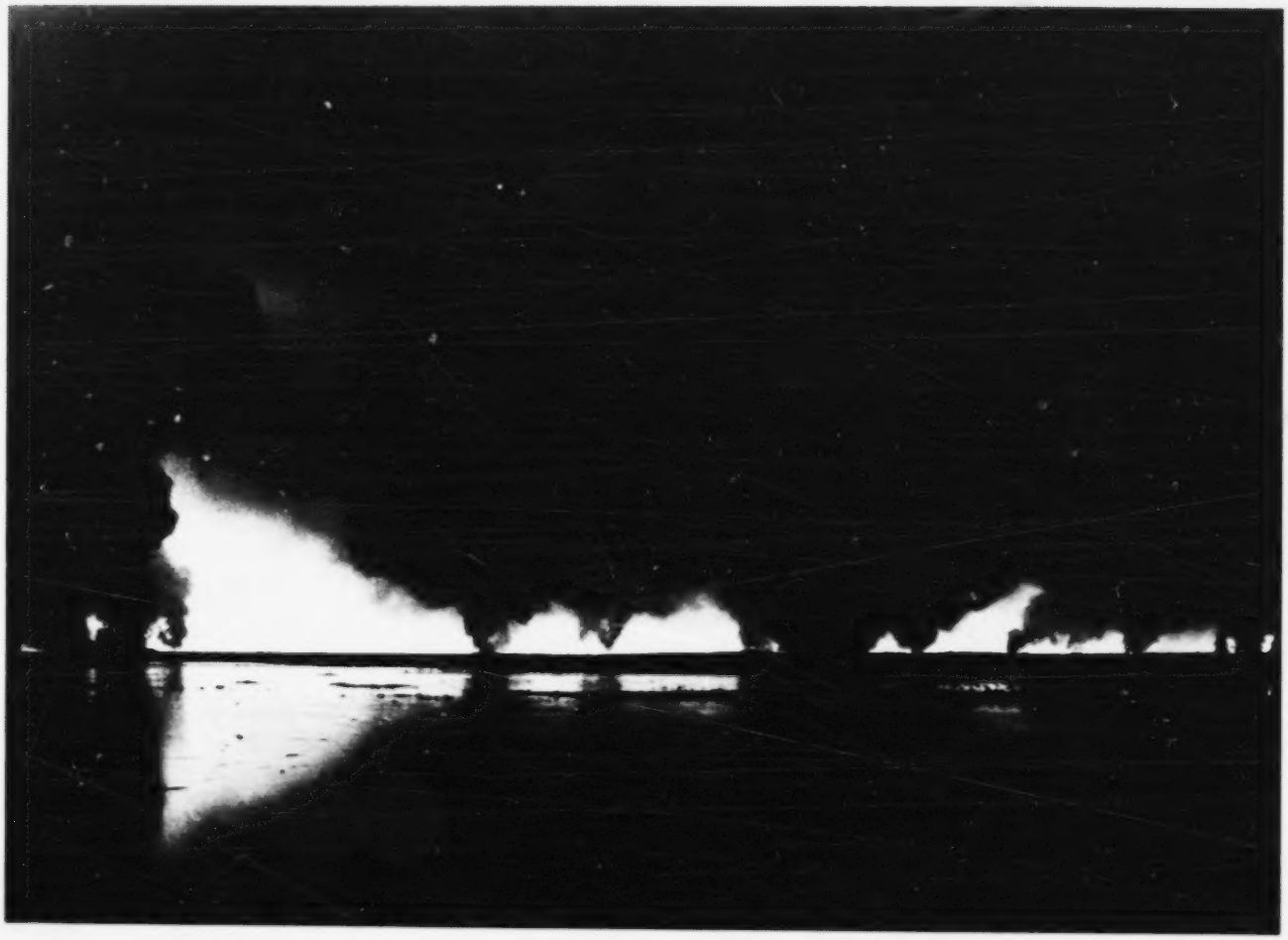

United Nations

Contents

United States updates policy on chemical weapons 2
Environment and security: a seminar 2
Environment and war: the case of Kuwait..... 3
Security Council resolution 687 4
Biological weapons prohibition 6
Disarmament publications information insert 7
Interview with Murray Thomson of Peacefund Canada..... 11
Education and information on disarmament 13
Prospects for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East 14
Award to Ruth Leger Sivard..... 15
NGO news items 16

The cover photograph shows smoke plumes from burning oil wells rising over Kuwait following the Iraqi occupation. (UN photo 15816 / J. Isaac)

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Disarmament Newsletter
June 1991 – Vol.9 No.3
The Disarmament Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the United Nations.

United States updates its policy on chemical weapons

On the eve of the spring session of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, President Bush announced a major shift in US policy on chemical weapons. Speaking in Washington on 13 May, he said that, to demonstrate the US commitment to banning chemical weapons now being negotiated at the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, the United States was "formally forswearing the use of chemical weapons for any reason, including retaliation, against any state, effective when the convention enters into force". Also, he continued, the United States "unconditionally commits itself to the destruction of all our stocks of chemical weapons within ten years of entry into force" of the convention.

This policy contrasted with the earlier position where the United States held that it must reserve the right to use chemical weapons in retaliation if attacked by such weapons, and be allowed to retain 2% of its stockpile (500 tons) until all chemical-weapons-capable States signed and ratified the convention.

President Bush also recommended that the Conference on Disarmament stay in continuous session to meet an early target date for concluding the convention.

Delegations from 40 countries attend the opening meeting of the January 1991session of the Conference on Disarmament at the Palais des Nations in Geneva (UN photo 177354)

Environment and security: a seminar

A seminar on "Environmental Stress, Conflict and National Security" was held at UN Headquarters to provide delegations with an opportunity to meet with several scholars who have written on this subject. The event was organized by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in co-operation with the Coolidge Center for Environmental Leadership and the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs.

Two speakers addressed the question of environmental degradation and its transboundary effects as threats to national security and as possible causes of conflict: Peter H. Gleick of the Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment and Security in Berkeley California and Shaukat Hassan, who is from Bangladesh and works at the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security. Daniel Deudney of the Center for Energy and Environmental Studies at Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, served as commentator on these presentations.

In a second section of the programme on depletion of and access to natural resources as causes of conflict, Professor Nazli Choucri of MIT, who comes from Egypt, spoke and Michael G. Renner of the Worldwatch Institute commented on the need to recast thinking for co-operation.

The third topic on common resource management as a means of confidence-building and conflict resolution was addressed by Ronnie Lipschutz of the University of California at Santa Cruz, and Thomas F. Homer-Dixon of the University of Toronto commented.

Environment and war: the case of Kuwait

A burning oil spill at the coast of Kuwait in the Persian Gulf. (UN photo 158122/ J. Isaac)

The aftermath of the Gulf war and the occupation of Kuwait has raised awareness of the potential for long-term damage to the environment of a nation and a whole region, and to the very fabric of society and economic life. In addition to environmental damage, the estimated 700 oil wells set fire in Kuwait burning as many as 6 million barrels of oil each day (equal to one third of the daily oil needs of all developing countries), has also caused economic loss.

The report to the Secretary-General on damage to Kuwait during the Iraqi occupation prepared by a United Nations mission led by Abdulrahim A. Farah provides initial estimates of economic and environmental costs. The mission was in Kuwait from 16 March until 4 April. It put the cost of bringing the wells under control at 1 to 1.5 million dollars per well.

While the smoke plumes rise some 1,300 metres at the bottom and about 2,500 metres at the top, ground observations suggest that the visible elements of the emissions have not gone into the upper atmosphere. This is probably because the oil fires were not sufficiently close to each other to create any firestorm effects. Initial measurements indicate that total hydrocarbons in the air are high, but comprehensive measurements of the gaseous and particulate emissions have yet to be made.

By the time the UN mission examined the situation in Kuwait some well fires had stopped burning due to coning. This occurs when the oil in a well burns faster than the flow of replacement oil from surrounding strata allowing water to move into the rock below the well.

Consequently the oil discharge pattern is changing in Kuwait as the number of oil wells on fire gradually decreases and the number of wells gushing unburnt oil increases and leads to a growing release of oil onto the land.

The future of the oil-soaked lands will be one of Kuwait's more obvious environmental problems arising from the occupation. The UN mission reported torrents of oil blocking roads and oil rivers flowing from the wells to newly formed oil lakes . The potential flow into the Persian Gulf was estimated at 80,000 barrels per day, but engineers were now building earth dams to contain the flows, and the gushing wells were starting to be capped.

In late January, a massive amount of oil had been reported in the Persian Gulf off the coast of Kuwait. The UN report states that the exact origins of this release and its volume were still matters of some controversy.

In a briefing to the UN mission, the Kuwait Oil Company recounted a sequence of events that indicated that the occupation authorities had released storage oil into the Gulf through pipelines and using anchored Iraqi tankers until the pipelines and the tankers were bombed in a way that stopped the flow. It was estimated that the spillage occurred between 22 and 25 January and amounted to 6 million barrels from the pipelines plus 4.2 million barrels from the tankers, about half of which had quickly evaporated with the remainder breaking into smaller patches moving southward to reach Saudi Arabian waters.

A special mission of the United Nations Environment Programme overflew the slick along the Saudi Arabia coast on 7 February and estimated its volume at 1 million barrels or less, but did not rule out the possibility that there might be other slicks in parts of the northern Persian Gulf where it could not go for security reasons.

In March the UN mission found no indication of a major oil slick along the Kuwaiti coast or offshore as far as about 30 kilometres seaward. However several small slicks were observed and also narrow bands of black carbon particles extending over varying distances resulting from atmospheric deposits of carbon emitted in the soot from the burning oil wells.

Two of the fragile ecosystems in the Persian Gulf are most likely to be affected negatively by the oil and soot deposits. The seagrass beds which are nursery grounds for a wide variety of marine organisms including the commercially important shrimps will, it is estimated, be significantly harmed for at least a year. The impact on the life of the coral islands reefs is likely to last much longer as a result of the direct smothering of live coral with oil or due to ingestion of oil droplets or toxic oil derivatives. Recovery will be especially difficult in view of the high salinity and temperatures which already place coral under stress.

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Security Council resolution 687

On 3 April the United Nations Security Council passed resolution 687 (1991) setting specific terms for a formal cease-fire to end the Persian Gulf war as soon as Iraq notified the Council of its acceptance of the provisions of the resolution. Iraq's acceptance was communicated by identical letters dated 6 April to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council. On 11 April, the President of the Council acknowledged the Iraqi reply as "official notification of the acceptance, irrevocable and without qualifying conditions, by Iraq of resolution 687 (1991)".

The resolution had been sponsored by France, Romania, the United Kingdom and the United States, and was adopted by a vote of 12 in favour, 1 against (Cuba), with 2 abstentions (Yemen, Ecuador). Demanding that Iraq and Kuwait respect the internationally recognized boundary between them as agreed and signed by both countries in 1963, the resolution established a demilitarized zone at that boundary.

Asked by the resolution to prepare for the monitoring of the demilitarized zone, and following consultations with the Governments of Kuwait and Iraq, the Secretary-General presented a plan for a "United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission" (UNIKOM) to the Security Council, which approved it on 9 April for an initial period of six months. A first group of UN observers left for the area on the same day. By 9 May there were 280 military observers from more than 30 countries in the demilitarized zone as well as 556 administrative and logistic support staff. The Chief Military Observer of UNIKOM is Major-General Günther G. Greindl (Austria), who is responsible to the Secretary-General who, in turn, reports regularly to the Security Council.

One major part of the resolution, Section C, deals with Iraq's mass destruction weapons capabilities. In it, the Security Council invited Iraq to reaffirm unconditionally its obligations to not use chemical and biological weapons under the Geneva Protocol of 1925, to ratify the biological weapons Convention of 1972, and to reaffirm unconditionally its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1968.

The Security Council also decided that Iraq shall unconditionally accept the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of its chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometres and all related components and facilities for their production and not to acquire such capabilities in the future. And it further decided that Iraq shall unconditionally agree not to acquire or develop nuclear weapons or nuclear-weapons-usable material or any subsystems or components or any related research, development, support or manufacturing facilities and that it should place all nuclear-weapons-usable materials under the exclusive control, for custody and removal, of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and that Iraq shall accept the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of all other nuclear-weapons-related components and research and production units.

Based on the requirements of the resolution, Iraq has submitted declarations of locations, amounts and types of chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missile sites, and of nuclear-weapons-usable material to the United Nations and, in the case of nuclear material, also to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

After Security Council approval on 10 April, the Secretary-General set up a Special Commission to carry out the following tasks:

- Conduct immediate on-site inspection of Iraq's biological, chemical and missile capabilities, based on Iraq's declarations and the designation of any additional locations by the Special Commission itself;
- Take possession for destruction, removal or rendering harmless of all chemical and biological weapons and all stocks of agents and all related subsystems and components and all research, development, support and manufacturing facilities;
- Supervise the destruction by Iraq of all its ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometres and the destruction of all related major parts and repair and production facilities;
- Assist the Secretary-General in developing a plan for the future ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with its undertaking not to use, develop, construct or acquire any of those items;
- Assist the Director-General of the IAEA to carry out immediate on-site inspection of Iraq's nuclear capabilities based on Iraq's declarations and the designation of any additional locations by the Special Commission itself;
- Assist IAEA in developing a plan for submission to the Security Council for the destruction, removal, or rendering harmless as appropriate of all nuclear weapons or nuclear-weapons-usable material or subsystems, components or related research, development, support or manufacturing facilities; and also to

assist IAEA to carry out that plan following approval by the Council.

- Assist IAEA in developing a plan for the future ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with its undertaking not to acquire or develop nuclear weapons or nuclear-weapons-usable material or facilities related to such weapons.

Following the appointment of a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman, the Special Commission started work on 25 April. The Chairman is Ambassador Rolf Ekeus of Sweden and the Vice Chairman is Robert L. Gallucci of the United States. Other members of the Special Commission are: Dr. Paal Aas of Norway; Ken Adachi of Japan; Professor B.N.C. Agu of Nigeria; Lt. Col. Andrzej Badek of Poland; Professor Bryan C. Barrass of the United Kingdom; Peter von Butler of Germany; Col. Armando Caputo of Italy; Ronald Cleminson of Canada; Dr. John Gee of Australia; Professor Helmut Hönig of Austria; B.A. Kuvshinnikov of the Soviet Union; Dr. A.J.J. Ooms of the Netherlands; Marjatta Rautio of Finland; Michel Saint Mleux of France; Roberto Sanchez of Venezuela; Lt. Col. Simanjuntak of Indonesia; Miroslav Splino of Czechoslovakia; Emile Vanden Bemden of Belgium; and Yuan Renfeng of China.

In a press conference on 9 May, Ambassador Ekeus said that one task of the Commission was to verify the correctness of the declarations made by Iraq regarding the locations, amounts and types of all specific weapons and materials called for in the resolution.

After having determined the location, quantity and condition of weapons facilities and materials, the Special Commission and also IAEA will work out detailed plans for the demolition or removal phase.

Twelve members of the Security Council voting for resolution 687 on 3 April 1991. (UN photo)

Reports on their further work were submitted to the Security Council on 18 May.

Ambassador Ekeus stated that the destruction phase would be complex and potentially hazardous; according to Iraq, some of the munitions in question were under the rubble of bombed buildings and some contained nerve gas. He said that, while the Special Commission was aware of such possible problems, it could not assess them fully until it had conducted its own on-site inspections.

Asked where chemical weapons could be destroyed safely, Ambassador Ekeus said that the Special Commission had not yet decided, but that economy, efficiency, speed and safety were all important. He noted that the quantity of chemical weapons declared by Iraq was of the order of some 500-600 tons as compared to the approximately 45,000 tons declared by the Soviet Union or the 32,000 tons declared by the United States for destruction under their bilateral efforts to encourage the early completion and full implementation of the global chemical weapons convention being negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament.

In answer to another question, Ambassador Ekeus stressed that he was convinced that Iraq would cooperate fully with the Special Commission. A full and speedy implementation of resolution 687 was also in Iraq's interest as that would allow the Security Council to lift the embargo against Iraq's exports.

In Section F of resolution 687, the Security Council decided that, when the Security Council determines that Iraq has met the requirements in Section C of the resolution, the embargo on which commodities and products originating in Iraq, which are first and foremost oil products, and the prohibitions against related financial transactions contained in resolution 661 (1990) shall have no further force or effect.

In Section F, the Security Council also decided that, pending further action by the Council, all States shall continue to observe and maintain the necessary national controls and procedures for the embargo on providing Iraq with arms and related material of all types. The Secretary-General was requested, in consultation with appropriate Governments, to develop guidelines for the international implementation of the continued embargo.

Biological weapons prohibition

The Third Review Conference of the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction will take place in Geneva from 9 to 27 September 1991.

Although biotechnology has advanced over the years, presenting new challenges to successive review conferences, the basic facts regarding the practical use of bacteriological and biological agents in warfare have remained the same.

While it has become increasingly practical to produce BW weapons in small research facilities, thus making them more accessible to more States, the basic problem of deployment remains. The training of military personnel to use BW agents and the mass vaccination of troops and civilians to protect one's own side would be difficult to accomplish without detection.

Furthermore there is growing evidence that a disease or disease agent would tend to remain viable for very long periods of time. In the case of anthrax, spores have been found to be viable in the soil for more than 50 years.

At the time of the First Review Conference in 1980, five years after the biological weapons Convention came into force, the view of many experts including military planners was that biological and bacteriological weapons were not of any great military value. By 1986 when the second review took place, there was some concern that new biotechnology might have increased the military value of these weapons.

As the BW Convention lacks verification procedures of the kind being negotiated in Geneva for a chemical weapons ban, major efforts were made during the Second Review Conference to strengthen the Convention by expanding the commitments made to consult one another and to co-operate in the application of the provisions of the Convention.

The confidence-building measures adopted in the Final Declaration of the Second Review Conference included exchanges of data and information on activities carried out at high risk laboratories where any research on biological weapons would take place. There were also provisions made for reporting any unusual outbreaks of disease.

Proposals calling for negotiation of an additional protocol on verification were set aside pending the completion – then viewed as rather near – of the chemical weapons convention.

The Third Review Conference of the BW Convention is expected to actively address the question of verification. One issue of concern might be that fear of others developing biological weapons would lead to more widespread laboratory research on vaccines and antidotes. Such research can be virtually indistinguishable from warfare agent research and contribute to escalation.

It is widely held that the best way to prevent such a race would be total openness of information on antidote and vaccine research.

Many argue that the best context to encourage openness would be an effective verification régime.

Others believe that legally binding verification of a ban against production of warfare agents is not a practical goal because, in contrast to the case of chemical weapons, a very small amount of live biological material could easily be multiplied to battlefield-scale quantities. There would thus be little to detect prior to deployment.

BW definitions

Quotations from *Disarmament Facts 65,* published by the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs.

Biological warfare agent:

Living organisms, whatever their nature, or infective material derived from them, which are intended to cause disease or death in humans, animals or plants, and which depend for their effects on their ability to multiply in the person, animal or plant attacked. Living organisms (e.g. rickettsiae, viruses, fungi and bacteria) may be used as weapons generally recognized as "bacteriological". To eliminate possible ambiguity, the phrase "bacteriological (biological) weapons" is used to cover all forms of the classes of weapons involved.

Biological toxin:

A chemical product of animal or vegetable cells that can produce harmful or lethal effects in human beings.

Biological weapon:

A weapon that contains and delivers, projects, disperses or disseminates a biological warfare agent. Delivery of biological agents may be in aerosol form, or as finely divided particles of liquid or solid distributed through gas or air. The container may be self-propelled, a missile or a shell. Alternatively, infected insects, vermin or water might be used. Biological warfare agents may enter the human body via the digestive system (food or water); the respiratory system (inhalation of micro-organisms); or the skin (insect bites).

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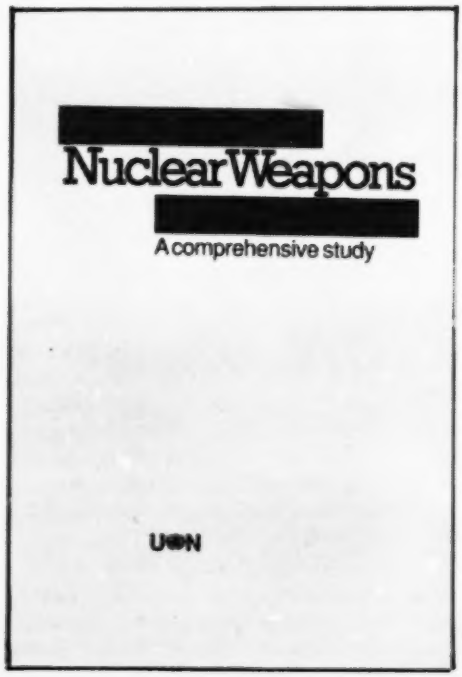

This study covers recent events including analysis of Warsaw Treaty Organization and NATO summit meeting documents from June and July 1990, which have political and military significance for nuclear doctrines and future arms reduction. *200 pp.*
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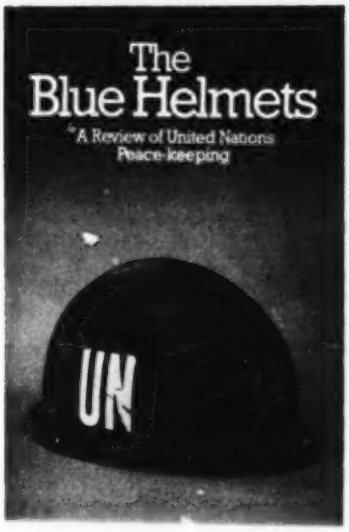
Peace-keeping



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This book presents accounts of all the peace-keeping operations which have been set up by the United Nations, since the first Military Observer Group in the Middle East in 1948 up to 1990 when the United Nations oversaw the political process in Namibia culminating in the birth of a new nation. *449 pp.*
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Disarmament Facts

72 The Role of the United Nations in the Field of Verification
Summary of a United Nations Study

73 New Trends in Science and Technology
Implications for International Peace and Security

74 Towards a Nuclear-Test Ban

75 Conventional Weapons
Efforts to Limit and Reduce Them

76 Towards a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East
Summary of a United Nations Study

77 Nuclear Weapons
Summary of a United Nations Study

78 South Africa's Nuclear-Tipped Ballistic Missile Capability
Summary of a United Nations Study

79 The United Nations and Disarmament (1945 - 1990)

Interview with Murray Thomson of Peacefund Canada

Q: As the first person in a series of interviews with NGO leaders and scholars, how were you involved in the beginning of the World Disarmament Campaign?

A: I was a member of the UN Group of Experts on a World Disarmament Campaign set up by the Secretary-General to pepare recommendations for the1982 Special Session on Disarmament and I was asked to write the first draft proposal.

Q: What was the basis for that?

A: There had been several meetings of the Group of Experts, and also the Department for Disarmament Affairs assisted me in sending a questionnaire to several hundred individuals and organizations. Almost one hundred replies provided a pool of ideas from all over the world – from the Young Farmers of Tanzania, the Medical Association for the Prevention of War in the UK, the Hungarian Association for the United Nations, and quite a range of groups.

Q: What was it that you hoped to achieve at that time?

A: My hopes, and those of other NGOs involved were that there would be a widespread and long-lasting collaboration between three partners in the Campaign, the UN Secretariat, the Governments and the NGOs. We envisaged the Governments providing sizable funds with the UN providing legitimacy for the programme, the co-ordination, expertise and staff, and the NGOs providing the major activities involving their membership. There were very large organizations associated with this planning such as the World Council of Churches, the World Association of Teachers, Trade Unions, representing a membership of many millions of people. The Swedish Association for Adult Education, for example, had thousands of study groups, and a number of the organizations that attended the annual meetings of the Finnish Association of Adult Eduction Organizations had large networks.

Q: How did the broad support affect your expectations?

A: We thought that the UN Secretariat, through the World Disarmament Campaign would take on an active role to join with grass roots groups to urge governments to take decisive disarmament measures. UNSSOD II had generated a tremendous amount of interest. As I remember it the two highlights of the UN Second Special Session on Disarmament were the acceptance of the Campaign and the huge rally in support of UNSSOD II involving almost one million people in Central Park.

Q: How was it visualized that the large NGO networks you mentioned would work with Governments and the UN?

A: We had a lot of different ideas that could be developed. One concept was that there would be regional campaigns focusing on specific objectives on which the General Assembly had already agreed. The idea was that the Campaign would be educating the public on the issues.

Q: How would you define that process? What are the key elements?

A: One of the key elements is participation – helping to define what the problem is, helping to lay out what some of the alternative ways of solving the problem are, taking part in the process and becoming part of the solution. That element of participation was one of the key concepts of the Campaign.

Q: What do you think is missing from the WDC programme now?

Murray Thomson addressing the United Nations Association of Canada following his receipt of the Lester Pearson Peace Medel.

A: What is missing is an opportunity for NGOs, who after all represent the millions of people who are going to be educated, to participate meaningfully in the preparation of activities, in the actual conduct of them and in their evaluation. Another thing that is missing is the funding necessary to carry out the campaign the way we had envisaged it; very little has been contributed up until now. At the same time it should be said that the World Disarmament Campaign has provided valuable educational publications and held useful workshops and conferences, including some with journalists, with professional associations, trade unionists and with parliamentarians.

Q: In view of the limited funds, do you see any way that the NGOs could help on that front?

A: It was earlier suggested by Dr. Homer Jack and others that NGOs might levy a modest tax on themselves to contribute to this work and to make available their own fund raisers for the Campaign. An outstanding example of an NGO funding agency is the Peace Development Fund in Amherst, Massachusetts. It was started about ten years ago and now raises about $1.5 million per year from individuals and foundations.

Q: How is that money used?

A: It's used to support grass roots organizations concerned with

peace education and advocacy – people all over the world who are seeking ways to address conflict and to help bring about an end to the arms race. It has been used, for example, to fund projects in which United States veterans have returned to Viet Nam to build clinics with their former adversaries. The PDF also sends trainers to various groups in their own communities to help them strengthen their own fund raising abilities.

Q: How does your organization, Peacefund Canada, work?

A: Though small, we have provided grants, usually from $500 to $1,000 to more than 200 projects in 30 countries. Ocasionally there are grants of $5,000 or $10,000, but not often. We make grants to groups that write in. We receive applications from many more gorups than we are able to help. We supported a group in Nigeria which wanted to write primers in the languages of two opposing villages where there was a great deal of tension and where the people were killing each other. Another request came from the women of Palau in the South Pacific who were trying to keep their island as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. There are a number of different groups like that.

Q: To what extent is your fund used outside Canada?

A: About half and half. More money is sent out of Canada, but there are more projects in Canada.

Q: Taking your fund and the Massachusetts-based Peace Development Fund as prototypes of a particular kind of NGO role, how would you see organizations like that interacting with the World Disarmament Campaign?

A: Quite easily, if we felt that we had a significant role to play in the Campaign. In a recent consultation among 10 North American funding organizations initiated by the Peace Development Fund and our own fund it was obvious that we had potential access to a great deal of funding and had a number of common concerns. We identified some priority objectives and examined the question of organizations in regions such as the Middle East that are working for reconciliation, and considered ways to support them. For example, we supported an organization of Palestinian women who seek dialogue with Israeli women in their own private homes. There are a number of organizations in the Middle East that are working for justice and peace and would do a lot more if they had more funding. I don't know whether the UN could be directly associated with projects like that, but some sort of partnership might be worked out whereby the Secretariat would help to establish a broad framework within which acceptable projects could be undertaken. Various NGOs and funding bodies could then seek to implement the projects that would be appropriate to them in a fairly autonomous way.

Q: Do you have any other ideas for the Campaign?

A: One idea for co-operation I have suggested is that the UN call for a review – some kind of stocktaking of the record and future of the World Disarmament Campaign in which NGOs would be actively involved. Such a review would consider what has been done, whether the Campaign has been able to reach our expectations, what are some of the possibilities for the future and what time-frame should be considered for future co-operation.

Q: Could such a consultation be directed towards a specific programme objective?

A: Yes, I think so. The United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs could invite a small group of organizations, including NGO funding agencies to be part of a project, for example, on the Middle East, or on southern Africa, and would consider this as part of the World Disarmament Campaign. I would hope that the NGOs would respond positively and be willing to do the leg work required. We could retain as much autonomy as the UN would wish, and could take full responsibility for the specific projects. We would like the DDA to sit down with us and comment on the ideas once we fed in the material and plans so that the total campaign would be more than the sum of its parts.

Q: Regarding your receipt of the Lester Pearson Peace Medal for 1990. What is the award, and what work was being recognized?

A: The award was initiated about 12 years ago by the United Nations Association of Canada to honour Canadians who were contributing in some way to the objectives which our former Prime Minister, Lester Pearson, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1956, felt to be important. Every year an individual is selected whose work reflects Lester Pearson's commitment to international development and peace. I was the twelfth recipient and was given a medal by the Governor-General of Canada.

Q: What is your view on the best approach to achieving real advances in the field of disarmament at this time?

A: I would like to see a reference back to the comprehensive approach taken in the Final Document of the 1978 Special Session on Disarmament. It encompasses a set of principles and a plan of action; in my

view it was one of the most important documents ever produced on disarmament.

Q: Since the world has moved forward now with major changes in Europe especially, I wonder what this suggests to you in terms of disarmament priorities.

A: There is a clear need for an arms trade register. That means that every country would have to examine its own record and help with the vital task of reducing the global arms trade.

Q: Have you seen the new report of the Canadian Export Controls Division of the Special Trade Relations Bureau in External Affairs? It has been issued as a UN document as the "First Annual Report on the Export of Military Goods from Canada, 1990".

A: Yes, I am familiar with it. It does not specify the exact kind of military commodities that go to specific countries, it just gives figures for broad categories and excludes exports to the United States. But it is an important beginning.

Q: What other next steps do you see in the field of disarmament?

A: I see the objective of a comprehensive ban on the testing of nuclear weapons as being very important since it would strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation régime that has curtailed the spread of nuclear weapons to more countries. It would also make it possible to stop the modernization of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States. Another point is that I think we should be asking governments when they are going to follow the recommendations that came out of the Thorsson report on Disarmament and Development, suggesting that they prepare specific plans for conversion from military to civilian production. Given the terrible situation in the Middle East and elsewhere, it should be clear that something needs to be done to shift priorities.

Q: What do you see as the lessons of the Iraq war?

A: It is a set of calamities built on previous injustices and the belief that might is right. But one positive result that might emerge is a feeling of obligation on the part of the United Nations and the world community to support repressed minorities in one way or another – I don't mean by military action, but by some other form of concrete action. There are many minority groups around the world that need such support. How the UN can work that out in such a way that it doesn't violate the legitimate sovereignty of States is a real challenge, yet one that must be faced.

Q: Is there any other point you would like to add?

A: I see NGOs working together either as part of the World Disarmament Campaign or by developing their own parallel campaign. In my view, as the Final Document of 1978 states, military action is obsolete as a way of solving international problems. I think that the chaos now in and around Iraq attests to this truth. If there are more and more organizations around the world that agree that military action is not the way to solve problems, then increasing numbers of people are going to be considering what to do. If there is going to be any real effort to bring about a reduction of international military procurement and deployment, it seems to me that it will only be effective if it is carried out in several countries at the same time. Every defense establishment depends upon another defense establishment for its justification.

Education and information on disarmament

The 1989 General Assembly passed a resolution inviting Member States and international governmental and non-governmental organizations to provide information to the United Nations on the efforts they had made to educate for disarmament as called for in the Final Document of the 1978 Special Session on Disarmament.

The relevant paragraph of the Final Document calls for the development of programmes , "with a view to contributing to a greater understanding and awareness of the problems created by the armaments race and of the need for disarmament".

One major programme is being implemented by the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP) in co-operation with the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs. IAUP is in the process of creating an international, interdisciplinary core programme of graduate school courses on arms limitation, disarmament and international security.

In the early 1980s, IAUP also gave important support to education for peace. In 1981, in the context of its triennial meeting which was held in Costa Rica, it helped develop the philosophy and curriculum for the United Nations University for Peace. IAUP also played a major role in the planning work for the International Year of Peace which was 1986.

NGOs and educational and research organizations which have been involved in education for disarmament are invited to send brief reports on their activities since 1978 to the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs, Room S-3100, United Nations, New York, N.Y. by August for inclusion in the DDA report to the General Assembly.

Prospects for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East

This was the topic of a Forum at United Nations Headquarters on 25 April organized by the NGO Committee on Disarmament with the help of the UN Department of Public Information and the Department for Disarmament Affairs. The background for this Forum was a United Nations study on the subject which was completed last year by a group of three consultant experts. The study had been requested by the General Assembly in 1988.

The Forum, chaired by Farouk Mawlawi of DPI, consisted of a panel with Ambassador Amre Moussa of Egypt; Ambassador Ephraim Tari of Israel; Silvana Da Silva of the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs and Secretary of the study; Jan Pravitz, one of the three consultant experts and Special Assistant for Disarmament in the Ministry of Defence of Sweden; and Benjamin Sanders, consultant expert and Executive Chairman of Programme for Promoting Nuclear Non-Proliferation.

Addressing the Forum to provide background on the study "on effective and verifiable measures which would facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East", its Secretary, Silvana Da Silva, stressed three aspects of the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone: it should be established by States in the free exercise of their sovereignty; a NWFZ would imply a total absence of nuclear weapons in the area designated as the zone; and a NWFZ would have a system of verification to guarantee compliance with the obligations deriving from the zone agreement.

Dr. Prawitz said that he was optimistic about the prospects for starting to implement the process outlined in the study. He had found, during consultations for the study with officials and scholars in several countries in the Middle East, that there are common views on a number of very fundamental matters. There was a common view that the geographical scope of the zone should contain a core zone from Libya in the west to Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Iran in the east, including the whole of the Arabian peninsula to Yemen and Oman in the south. It was understood that neither Turkey nor Pakistan would be expected to be included at this stage. Turkey is already involved in NWFZ discussions with other countries in the Balkans, and a Pakistani commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free status is considered as being dependent first of all on India renouncing the nuclear-weapon option.

Also he had found a common understanding that the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East would take some time and would require a step-by-step approach based on a series of confidence-building measures.

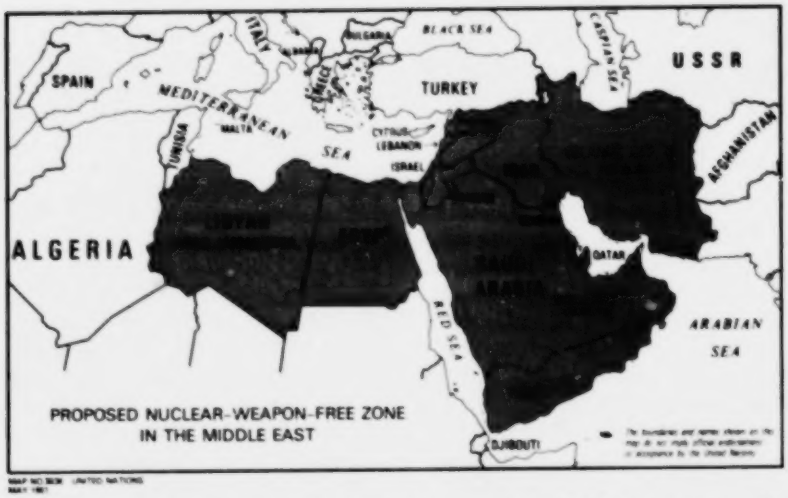
The potential role of IAEA in verification for a Middle East NWFZ was another point on which the consultations developed new insights. It was felt that, unlike the system for Latin America where there is a special agency, the whole task of verification in the Middle East should rather be entrusted to IAEA, which would be able to develop procedures beyond those used for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Dr. Prawitz also reported that not only negative guarantees by nuclear-weapon States that they would not attack or threaten to attack any country in the zone with nuclear weapons would be needed, but that the consultations had revealed strong interest in having guarantees from major Powers outside the region in order to provide positive guarantees of assistance to any State that would be the victim of a nuclear attack and to guarantee sanctions against the attacker.

Benjamin Sanders said he saw a difference between the political purpose of the two existing NWFZ treaties, for Latin America and for the South Pacific, and the motivation for having such a zone in the Middle East. Whereas the two existing treaties had been intended primarily to keep the existing nuclear Powers out of the area, the Middle East NWFZ would be concerned in the first place with the question of the acquisition of nuclear-weapon capabilities by new countries.

Mr. Sanders said he was not optimistic that the States of the region would recognize their enlightened self-interest in creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It can only come about, he said, if the people concerned come to the conclusion that it is a matter of life or death and if they are willing to let that realization overcome immediate antogonisms.

Ambassador Moussa said the study highlighted crucial points with which Egypt concurred. The prospects for nuclear proliferation in the Middle East were ominous, and therefore needed to be addressed promptly so as not to add to the complexity of the situation in the region. Legally binding commitments by all States of the region to relinquish the nuclear weapons option were prerequisites for the establishment of a NWFZ, and no country in the Middle East should consider that it should be immune from denuclearization.

It was therefore important, Ambassador Moussa stressed, for Israel to renounce the nuclear option very clearly and formally, "and also its presumed nuclear capability". Egypt



Map showing the core area of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as proposed in the UN study in the report of the Secretary-General, A/45/435.
(United Nations Cartographic Unit)

could not overemphasize this point and had raised it over the years in calling for Israel to adhere to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty of 1968. This would be a very important confidence-building measure that would help launch a serious process of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Egypt also placed great importance on the verification and control procedures needed to guarantee compliance with the obligations that would be taken on to establish a NWFZ and stressed the role of the United Nations in the process of establishing such a zone.

Ambassador Moussa concluded by emphasizing the importance of the Egyptian proposal for a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East which Egypt believed was an important basis for future co-operation in the establishment of regional peace and security.

Ambassador Ephraim Tari of Israel said that the study gave much thought to the circumstances and characteristics of the Middle East and dwelt on what the experts called the precariousness of Israel's situation. He said that a nuclear-weapon-free zone was one way Israel saw to bring peace to the Middle East, and that confidence-building measures through direct negotiations, which inhibit further wars, were the indispensable precursors of a credible NWFZ.

Ambassador Tari said that the confidence-building measure that would be of greatest interest to Israel would be an acknowledgement of the right of the existence of all States within secure borders and the renunciation of hostile acts which stand to derogate Israel's legitimacy.

Without such elements, the efforts made to establish a NWFZ could be seen as a disguised attempt to weaken Israel and to reduce its security. Consequently Israel proposed that a guiding principle for the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East was the need for free and direct negotiations between the States concerned.

Ambassador Tari reaffirmed that Israel would not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East, but he said that it was disturbing that some Arab countries which refused to negotiate directly with Israel for a NWFZ nevertheless insisted that international safeguards be applied to Israel's nuclear installations.

The Forum was concluded by a question period chaired by Sister Mary Beth Reissen, President of the NGO Committee on Disarmament.

Ruth Leger Sivard awarded

World Military and Social Expenditures, (WMSE) edited and published by Ruth Leger Sivard since 1974, has been called a fact-laden portrait of global priorities. By poignant comparisons , it demonstrates the choices nations make.

Its 1991 edition, to be issued in June, will show that the proportion of civilian deaths has been going up over the years while the proportion that is military has gone down. In another section, the 1991 *WMSE* observes that during the 20th century, more often than not, the country that started a war was defeated.

On 9 May 1991, Ruth Leger Sivard was given the Josephine Pomerance Award by the NGO Committee on Disarmament. Presenting the award, Dr. William Epstein, of UNITAR, read letters of tribute to Ruth Sivard from authors who had written prefaces to *WMSE*. These included Carl Sagan, John Kenneth Galbraith and George F. Kennan.

Prof. Kennan wrote that Ruth Leger Sivard had laboured to hold before the eyes of the world the shocking disparity between military and social expenditures all across the international scene. In another tribute, United States Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering said that the integral role of Ruth Sivard had contributed immeasurably to the depth of understanding and appreciation of this subject in the academic and diplomatic communities.

The award ceremony was addressed by Ambassador Rolf Ekeus of Sweden, Executive Chairman of the Special Commission for the decommissioning of Iraq's mass destruction weapons capabilities.

WMSE can be ordered from World Priorities, Box 25140, Washington , D.C.20007, USA.

NGO news items

The brief report below on activities of non-governmental organizations includes some of the events and programmes which have come to the attention of the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs. The coverage does not imply any judgement by the United Nations.

Movimento Federalista Europeo (MFE),together with Fondazione Europea Luciano Bolis and Instituti di Studi Federalisti Altiero Spinelli organized an international meeting in Pavia, Italy from 19 to 21 April on European Union, North-South and East-West Relations.Most participants were from the European Union of Federalists, the Young European Federalists (Jeunesse Européenne Fédéraliste or JEF), the World Association for World Federation, the Mouvement Fédéraliste Africain and the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly. **Contact:** Franco Spoltore or Luisa Trumellini, MFE, Via Porta Pertusi 6, 27100 Pavia, Italy. (Tel: 39-382-308539, Fax: 39 382 303784)

The Zimbabwe Peace and Disarmament Committee, which was set up at the initiative of the United Nations Association of Zimbabwe, would like to get in touch with organizations concerned with human rights, peace, disarmament and international security with a view to organizing co-operative projects. **Contact:** Leon Poza Mugofa, Chairman, The Zimbabwe Peace and Disarmament Committee, P.O.Box 66182, Kopje, Harare, Zimbabwe.

The International Association for Scientific Exchange on Violence and Human Coexistence (ASEVICO) will hold its 2nd World Congress on Violence and Human Coexistence in Montreal, Canada from 13-17 July 1992. The Congress has been recognized officially as a major event in the programme of celebrations marking the 350th anniversary of the city of Montreal. **Contact**: Prof. Venant Cauchy, Chairman, Organizing Committee, c/o Philosophy Dept., Université de Montréal, P.O. Box 6138, Succ. A, Montreal, Canada H3C 3J7. (Tel: 1 514 343 6111, ext. 1330, Fax: 1 514 343 2252)

The Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University will hold a conference on Strategic Studies in a Changing World at the ANU, Canberra, Australia from 29 July to 1 August 1991. The wide range of topic covered will included New Directions for Strategic Studies, World Order in the 1990s: Towards a Global Security,Security Issues in Northeast Asia, Strategic Developments in Southeast Asia and Arms Control and Confidence Building in the Region. **Contact:** Dr. David Horner, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, GPO Box 4, Canberra, Australia. ACT 2601 (Tel: 06 2492174/2493690, Fax: 06 2571893, Telex: AA62694 SOPAC)

The German-Soviet "Week of Peace" 1991 will take place from 10 to 17 November, jointly organized for the third time by Soviet and German groups. **Contact:** 3rd German-Soviet Week of Peace, Christlicher Friedendienst, Rendeler Str. 9-11. D-W-6000 Frankfurt a.M. 60, Germany. (Tel. 49 69 459 071)

The Soviet Peace Fund has called for urgent medical help for victims who are still waiting for proper treatment following the Chernobyl disaster, and for summer recreation opportunities so that children from the Chernobyl area can go abroad to summer camps or stay with families for short visits in a healthier environment. Medical help depends in part on having additional equipment such as that needed for bone marrow transplantation or vans with diagnostic laboratory equipment and with the capacity to monitor the level of radiological pollution in land and food. **Contact**: Vladimir Kokashvili, 10 Kroptkinskaya St. , Moscow, 119889, USSR. (Tel: 7 095 202 4236, Fax: 7-095 202 3732, Telex: 411 489 KAFAZ SU)

The Conflict Resolution and Peace Education Network for Africa is seeking support in its campaign to have the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games declared the Peace Olympics by the United Nations. The concept includes efforts to dedicate a number of fairs, exhibitions, sports events and workshops around the world to the joint ideals of the International Olympic Charter and the United Nations. Individuals and organizations who would like to support this project, either as a grass roots movement, or to help give it governmental or intergovernmental endorsement , are invited to **Contact**: Samie Ihejirika, Project Co-ordinator, Conflict Resolution and Peace Education Network for Africa P.O.Box 8010, Kaduna, Nigeria. (Telex: 71688, Fax: 234-09 5231026)